



MEETING SUMMARY

TRANS-LAKE WASHINGTON PROJECT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REDMOND REGIONAL LIBRARY, REDMOND, WA FEBRUARY 14, 2001 1:00 — 5:00 P.M.

INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME

Pat Serie, EnviroIssues, welcomed the committee members on this beautiful Valentine's Day. Chair Aubrey Davis, Washington Transportation Commission, was unable to attend the meeting, and Vice Chair Dave Earling, Sound Transit, had been called out on official business just prior to the start of the meeting. Pat stated that she would act as chair for the meeting.

Jack McKenzie, Hunts Point, was introduced as an alternate for Fred McConkey. Richard Conrad, City of Mercer Island, was serving as an alternate for Bryan Cairns. Gary Hughes, FHWA, was introduced as an alternate for Gene Fong.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Robert Brog, 8400 NE 7th St., Medina, read a letter to the committee expressing opposition to any consideration of a tunnel through Medina. He stated that 140 homeowners were contacted, none of whom expressed support for the idea, and he submitted thirteen pages of signatures. He urged the Executive Committee to drop any possibility of considering such an option as soon as possible.

Maurice Cooper, resident of Madison Park, expressed his support for Mr. Brog's comments and similarly urged the committee to not consider a tunnel through the Madison Park community on the west side of Lake Washington. He also urged the committee to expedite action on the early actions that came out of the Trans-Lake Washington Study, especially those affecting Madison Park, without waiting for the completion of the Trans-Lake Project.

Theodore Lane, NOISE, read from a letter expressing concern that the project is not looking at the noise pollution problems on the 520 corridor. He noted that 20 years ago WSDOT promised mitigation that has not been acted upon; NOISE has established a transportation defense fund, to look at alternatives as necessary in dealing with WSDOT on this issue.

In reaction to the public comments, Jeff Peacock, Parametrix, stated that the early actions status is updated quarterly to the committees, and those updates are posted on the website. There will be an early actions status update at the Executive Committee meeting on March 26, 2001. John

Okamoto, WSDOT, stated that WSDOT was working cooperatively with NOISE until funding was cut by I-695, and that WSDOT does intend to address the noise issues.

AGENDA REVIEW

Pat Serie reviewed the agenda, and no comments or changes were made.

I-90 STUDY UPDATE

Agnes Govern, Director of Sound Transit Regional Express, and Renee Montgelas, WSDOT, presented a briefing on the status of the I-90 study. All decisions for the project include the original signatories of the 1976 Memorandum of Agreement (WSDOT, City of Mercer Island, City of Seattle, City of Bellevue, King County/Metro Transit), plus Sound Transit (the funding organization), the Federal Transit Administration, and the Federal Highways Administration.

Agnes outlined the alternatives still under consideration, and the benefits and drawbacks for each:

- Alternative R-1 – No action
- Alternative R-2B Modified – Two-way center roadway
- Alternative R-5 Modified – Shoulders converted for transit use
- Alternative R-8A – Carpool/transit in each direction in outer roadway by narrowing lanes

Public comments have indicated that there is a majority of support for Alternative R-8A. The bicycle community has addressed its concerns with the safety issues involved. There has also been some interest in completing an EIS rather than an Environmental Analysis (EA) for the project. Safety issues are also a primary concern.

There is close, on-going coordination between the I-90 project and the Trans-Lake Washington Project. There is a project budget shortfall for I-90 in the range of \$20 – 40 million. The Sound Transit Board will need to decide on whether to pursue an EA or and EIS, based on a staff report of the three build alternatives and safety issues to be completed in May 2001. The current schedule outline has an Environmental Analysis and public input to be completed in 2001/2002. Appropriate administrative actions and final design would occur by 2004, with construction to be complete by 2006.

Renee Montgelas gave a perspective on WSDOT involvement in the project. WSDOT has taken the approach that it would like to see two-way transit on I-90 proceed, and as such was instrumental in developing alternative R-8A last year, at a point when the steering committee was at an impasse in coming to consensus for moving the project forward. Alternative R-8A represents the only alternative that meets the purpose and need statement without increasing congestion. The tradeoff is that there is a projected increase in accident rates. The alternative also optimizes the use of the existing facility and opens the facility to reduced amounts of congestion.

Daryl Grigsby, City of Seattle, asked how successfully the project has worked with the bicycle and pedestrian community in addressing the concerns about reducing the bicycle/pedestrian pathway. Renee Montgelas stated that the preliminary proposal would have narrowed the bicycle lane to eight feet. Consultants and engineers are looking at other options for maintaining the width and the safety of the existing facility. The agencies involved believe they are working in good faith with the bicycle community.

There was also a question raised about the money shortfall on the project. Currently, Sound Transit has \$18 million to spend, with \$2.5 – 3 million already spent. At its conception, Sound Move felt that the project would be much shorter and easier than it has turned out.

A question was also raised about figures for alternative R-2B that demonstrate that it is a less attractive alternative than either alternative R-5 or R-8A. WSDOT did not support R-2B since it added unacceptable levels of congestion to the outer roadways. Studies showed there would be 8.25 hours of congestion per day in 2002 under alternative R-2B, 7.75 hours of congestion under alternative R-5, and zero hours of congestion under alternative R-8A. The baseline is 7.75 hours of congestion.

Connie Marshall, City of Bellevue, noted that alternative R-8A, while it does narrow the lanes below current design standards, and would decrease the safety of the facility, also preserves the option of using the center roadway for high capacity transit (HCT). That was one of the original charges for the steering committee.

A question was asked about WSDOT's position on moving Mercer Island residents out of the center roadway and into the outer roadway general purpose lanes. WSDOT has taken the position that increasing congestion onto the outer roadway GP lanes without a corresponding increase in capacity is unacceptable. Alternative R-8A results in 15% capacity improvements. That additional capacity will be immediately filled by Mercer Island residents if and when the center roadway is converted to HCT. From a regional perspective, R-8A is preferable.

Pat Serie posed the question that was the underlying reason for discussing the I-90 study during the meeting: Should the I-90 study be brought under the scope of the Trans-Lake Project EIS? The suggestion had been made through a letter to the Executive Committee dated January 10, 2001, and co-signed by 1000 Friends of Washington, the Bicycle Alliance of Washington, the Cascade Bicycle Club, the League of Women Voters of Seattle, the Seattle Community Council Federation, and the Transportation Choices Coalition.

The Executive Committee members did not support bringing the I-90 project under the scope of the Trans-Lake Project. The general consensus was that the I-90 progress should not be restrained by the presumably slower Trans-Lake EIS process.

I-405 CORRIDOR PROGRAM

Mike Cummings, WSDOT Project Manager for the I-405 Corridor Program, presented an overview of the status of the I-405 Corridor Program. He reviewed the committee structure, agencies represented, area of study, the congestion problems faced in the corridor, and the nature

of the programmatic EIS being undertaken. A record of decision (ROD) is expected for the corridor by the end of 2001. He also reviewed each of the alternatives, and the mixture of highway, transit, and bicycle and pedestrian focus. HCT opportunities will be preserved by securing the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) railroad right-of-way. More information can be found on the project website at www.wsdot.wa.gov/I-405.

Jeff Peacock reviewed the coordination underway between the I-405 study and the Trans-Lake Project. Bus rapid transit (BRT) is being considered in the I-405 corridor. Trans-Lake is looking at both BRT and bus-only lanes. As I-405 is widened, total reconstruction of the I-405/SR 520 interchange will be needed. The Trans-Lake Project may not result in the definition of a long-term strategy for the BNSF right-of-way.

The next milestone for the I-405 Corridor Study will be issuing a draft EIS and a preferred recommendation. Funding issues and potential options will be more clear when the legislature concludes its session in May, 2001.

DEFINITION OF MODAL ALTERNATIVES

Jeff Peacock reviewed the modal alternatives to ensure that the committee members are clear on what is being considered in each. He again emphasized that the No Action alternative will receive as much scrutiny as all the Build Alternatives. Major points in his presentation include:

- Seismic vulnerabilities in the fixed spans would need to be addressed in both the No Action and Minimum Footprint alternatives. There would be obvious cost implications.
- B3 – HOV and GP lanes:
 - Eastbound GP lanes could begin at Montlake, or at I-5.
 - Westbound GP lanes could connect at Fairview/Eastlake area, or terminate at I-5 connecting into the Roanoke/Harvard on-ramps.
 - SR 202 would be the eastern terminus for GP lanes.

Performance information will be distributed next month. Jeff again stressed that the purpose of understanding the modal alternatives independently of each other is to get a sense of how each element contributes to the performance of multi-modal alternatives. A preferred alternative will not be identified.

The second level screening will include photographic information on an as-needed basis. These will only be used to give a general impression of design possibilities, and should not be construed to indicate decisions.

Dan Becker recommended that costs not be considered as a criterion, since the committee will not be making recommendations on funding. There was some discussion on this point, and it was generally felt that the committee understands the limitations of the cost information, and that the committee would not allow itself to decide on an option solely based on cost. Pat Serie

reminded the committee of its discussion on including cost information when working on the first and second level screening criteria.

John Okamoto, WSDOT, also offered that the committee had directed the staff to look at ways to accelerate the process. WSDOT is already looking at a financing plan as well as the construction methodology and phasing, as part of the recommendation of the ensuing value analysis. The information will not be included in the EIS, but the Executive Committee will be involved in some of that discussion.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AND COMMUNITY DESIGN

Amy Grotefendt, EnviroIssues, updated the committee on public involvement activities, including upcoming open houses in the SR 520 and the I-90 corridors. An open house for all three committees would be held on February 21, 2001, from 4:00 – 7:00 p.m. at Union Station in Seattle. This will give an opportunity for committee members to review preliminary design ideas to be presented at the community design workshops the following week. She also reviewed the schedule for the second round of community design workshops.

It was recommended that talking points be prepared for the committee members, in order to adequately field questions from the public on the Trans-Lake Project. This should include a description of what stage the process is at, as well the current schedule.

It was also recommended that a committee open house be held on the eastside, for those committee members who would otherwise find it difficult to get to downtown Seattle during rush hour.

Dan Becker also stated that in the community design workshops, it was erroneously summarized that the Points Communities would be interested in low-income housing and commercial development on lids in the area; no one in the area is interested in such development. Dan clarified that a representative from Kirkland had suggested the idea, but quickly backed off during the meeting as the suggestion became very unpopular.

Connie Marshall brought some feedback to the project team from members of the Advisory Committee. Some of the members are frustrated that so much information is being presented, without having enough time to discuss the ideas. She suggested that questions, answers and other correspondence ‘off-line’ with members of the committee be summarized and distributed by the project team.

UPCOMING MEETING SCHEDULE, ACTION ITEMS

Pat Serie reviewed the upcoming schedule for the next several months. It was emphasized that the volume and complexity of information to be presented to the committees would be increasing over the next several months. There will be a need for additional focus on this project, and it was suggested that the Executive Committee members be briefed by the Technical Committee and staff members in the next several months.

ACTION ITEMS

- Distribute I-90 numbers demonstrating Alternative R-2B as a less favorable alternative than R-5 or R-8A.
- Distribute bullets/talking points on current stage in EIS process, when decisions will be made, what decisions have been made, so that committee members can talk with constituents before Community Design Workshop open houses.
- Track and distribute off-line questions/comments/interactions between project team and Advisory Committee members.

MEETING HANDOUTS

- Agenda
- I-405 Corridor Program Status Summary, (presentation),
- Update on Public Involvement and Community Design Workshops, (presentation), February 13, 2001
- Highway Modal Alternatives Summary of Definitions for Modal Evaluations, (presentation), February 5, 2001
- I-90 Project Briefing for Trans-Lake Executive Committee (presentation), February 14, 2001

Public Comment

- Letter from Robert Brog, February 14, 2001
- NOISE Trans-Lake Washington Study Resolution, undated

MEETING ATTENDEES

Committee Members

Present	Name	Organization
X	Becker Daniel	City of Medina
X	Berry Jeanne	Town of Yarrow Point
	Cairns Bryan	City of Mercer Island
	Conlin Richard	City of Seattle
	Crawford Jack	Sound Transit Board
	Davis Aubrey	Washington Transportation Commission
	Earling Dave	Sound Transit Board
	Edwards Bob	Puget Sound Regional Council
	Fong Gene	Federal Highway Administration
	Ganz Nona	City of Kirkland
	Gehrke Linda	Federal Transit Administration
X	Grigsby Daryl	City of Seattle
	Horn Jim	Washington State Senate

X	Ives	Rosemarie	City of Redmond
	Jacobsen	Ken	Washington State Senate
X	Marshall	Connie	City of Bellevue
X	Martin	George	City of Clyde Hill
	McConkey	Fred	Town of Hunts Point
	McIver	Richard	City of Seattle
	McKenna	Rob	King County Council
	Murray	Ed	WA State House of Representatives
X	Noble	Phil	City of Bellevue
X	Okamoto	John	WSDOT - NW Region
	Pflug	Cheryl	WA State House of Representatives
	Sullivan	Cynthia	King County Council
X	Taniguchi	Harold	King County Department of Transportation
	Wills	Heidi	City of Seattle

Committee Alternates

Present	Name	Organization
	Asher David	City of Kirkland
	Bowman Jennifer	Federal Transit Administration
	Drais Dan	FTA
	Carpenter Trish	Town of Hunts Point
X	McKenzie Jack	Town of Hunts Point
	Creighton Mike	City of Bellevue
	Demitriades Paul	City of Medina
	Dye Dave	WSDOT - NW Region
	Fimia Maggi	Puget Sound Regional Council / King County Council
	Hague Jane	King County Council
X	Hughes Gary	Federal Highway Administration
	Jahncke El	City of Mercer Island
X	Conrad Richard	City of Mercer Island
	Kargianis George	Washington Transportation Commission
X	Paine Thomas	City of Redmond
	Rourke Philip	City of Clyde Hill
	Rutledge Steve	City of Yarrow Point
X	Switaj Ed	City of Seattle
	White Bob	Sound Transit

Other attendees

Robert Brog, Medina
Maurice Cooper, Madison Park
Theodore Lane, NOISE
Philip Grega, Seattle
Doug Pullen, Kemper Development
Kingsley Joneson, Portage Bay – Roanoke Community Club

Steven Buri, Discovery Institute
Andrew Schmid, King County
Bernard van de Kamp, City of Bellevue
Sally Marks, King County
Elizabeth Newstrum, Town of Yarrow Point

Project Team

Les Rubstello, WSDOT
Barbara Gilliland, Sound Transit
Don Billen, Sound Transit
Jeff Peacock, Parametrix
Pat Serie, EnviroIssues
Amy Grotefendt, EnviroIssues
Paul Hezel, EnviroIssues

PJH